the Alliance Weekly

MAY 8, 1957

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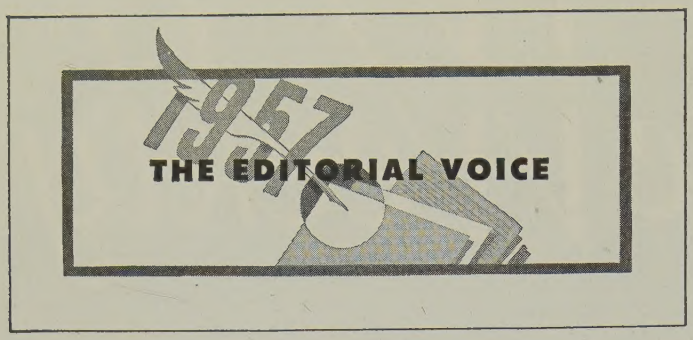
In this issue

THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN DECISIONS

By Rev. William J. Krutza



Guest Editorial

By Rev. Paul S. Allen
President, Simpson Bible College

ARAB OR ISRAELI?

It is impossible for the Christian of today not to take an interest in the intense struggle going on between the two branches of the family of Abraham. He sees in events in the Middle East an extension of that struggle which took place in Abraham's home as between Ishmael, the son who came into the home by Abraham's efforts to bring about a fulfillment of God's promise to him, and Isaac, the son God gave by miracle.

Today the Arabic sons of Ishmael and the Israeli sons of Isaac are pitted against each other for the possession of some of that very land to which Ishmael turned after being ejected from the home of Abraham. During the intervening 4,000 years the fortunes of the two nations have ebbed and flowed, Israel losing its hold at times and exercising only nominal control at other times. A. D. 70 marked the end of Herod's temple and blasted the hopes of the nation for a unified national and religious life centered in Jerusalem.

With the fading of Jewish hopes, the sons of Ishmael, who had occupied the desert fringes of the promised land for over two millenniums, burst from their desert home under the impact of a new faith (Islam) and overran those areas of Palestine sacred to both Christian and Jew. World War I brought to Israel its first tangible hope of reëstablishing its national home on its sacred soil. Jew and Arab lived side by side under the British Mandate until 1948 when, with British withdrawal, hostilities resulted in the partitioning of Palestine.

The question is often asked: Does not this land really belong to Israel, and should not Christian opinion be on the side of restoring it to its owner?

True, the Christian has an ingrained sympathy for the aspirations of the nation Israel because Christian faith is so deeply planted in Jewish history. The Christian could easily forget that today God deals with nations on a basis of equality of opportunity in relation to the gospel. He has no "favorites" among the peoples of earth. The Christian cannot espouse the political cause of one nation against another merely on the basis of sentiment. The tensions of modern life can be relieved only as the words of the Balfour Declaration are kept in mind: "Nothing shall be done which may prejudice the . . . rights of existing . . . communities."

But for Christians who accept at face value the prophecies concerning a glorious future for Israel there is a deeper problem. Are these not the days foretold by Old Testament prophets, the days of the restoration of the nation to its land? If so, would we not be found fighting against God or at least indifferent to His plan if we did not back Israeli demands completely?

Regardless of our expectations of fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Israel's future, the Christian must not lose his perspective of right and wrong. The Israel of today must justify its acts, not in terms of its ultimate destiny (which is not universally recognized or accepted) but in terms of the moral conscience of the nations of today. The Christian, even while sympathizing with the ultimate objectives of the reëstablishing of a national home for this people, must yet remember that here as elsewhere the end does not justify the means. If Israel's reactions to probings along its borders seem out of proportion to the provocations suffered—admittedly a two-eyes-for-an-eye policy of retaliation—the Christian is duty-bound to apply the measuring stick of moral values as he knows them.

God does not need to use questionable methods in bringing about the fulfillment of prophecy. Prophecy is history seen in advance, but it is not necessarily morally desirable or approved. Israel's return to its land is clearly foretold in the prophetic Scriptures. Prophetic students can detect in the record indications that the return will be in unbelief. Possibly that unbelief will encourage methods incompatible with the Christian sense of justice. Such events, even though prophesied in advance, need not confuse the Christian. The fulfillment of God's promise will be an Isaac of miracle rather than an Ishmael of improvisation.

All that has been said is not to be construed as prejudicial to the Israeli cause in its struggle for national survival. Israel's cause has many aspects to commend it to Christian people. It was forced into a war of survival upon the withdrawal of Britain in 1948, and the frontiers of today were achieved in that struggle against foes that sought Israel's complete annihilation. It is entitled to protection along its frontiers against the annoying sniping which has cost lives and property. It is entitled to its share of the Jordan waters for the development of its land. It is entitled to access to the Gulf of Aqaba if declared by the World Court to be an international body of water. It is entitled to be treated like other nations in the use of the Suez Canal. Furthermore, it seems only fair that if sanctions are to be imposed by the United Nations against violators of its directives, they should be imposed across the board and not against the tiny newcomer with little or no power to defy that body.

These are judgments based on the justice of the Israeli cause and not on its role as fulfiller of prophecy. The Christian of today must be aware of that distinction if he is to avoid the pitfalls of the "holy war" which the secular as well as the Christian conscience rightly condemns as a distorted understanding of God's dealings today with men and nations.

What does it mean to make a decision "by faith"?

The Basis of Christian Decisions

By REV. WILLIAM J. KRUTZA

OCCASIONALLY the United States Post Office Department clears out all parcels that have not been delivered because they lacked proper addresses or because the addresses were obliterated through damage in shipment. This clearing is done by auction, the packages being sold sight unseen as far as contents are concerned. This same idea is used in advertising schemes and also is a feature of many party games. People bid on items that are unseen with the hope of getting more than their money's worth.

In Christian circles some people believe that this is the proper method for making Christian decisions. We should do everything "by faith." We should thrust ourselves out before knowing anything about what we are to receive or to do as a result of our decision. We are to decide without knowledge of facts or circumstances. This has been properly called "blind faith."

The practice of making decisions without knowledge has produced much of the easy believism so widespread among evangelicals. Many people have marched down the aisle to "make a decision" for Christ without knowing what decision they were making. It has been only by the grace of God that some of these later became genuine Christians through an experiential apprehension of the atoning work of Christ, the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ and the inner working of the Holy Spirit. In our ministerial rush to establish good records in a state, district or denominational office we have disregarded the laborious effort of bringing each person to conviction through Biblical knowledge.

Faith must come as a result of our knowledge of something or someone. Without knowing of the work of Jesus Christ we have nothing in which to center our faith. Confirmation of this is found in the fact that as we learn more about our wonderful Lord through the study of the Scriptures (which give the facts about God's revelation to us), we find our faith increasing. Those who lack faith usually lack a good working knowledge of the Word of God.

If it were not true that Christian decisions are based upon knowledge as well as upon faith, why should we support Bible institutes, colleges and seminaries? Are these institutions only for those who do not know how to live "by faith"? Even the church Bible school and the weekly sermons by the pastor would have little value unless God intended to educate people to make Christian decisions.

The New Testament aptly illustrates this truth. The sermon of Peter at Pentecost is filled with facts upon which Peter appealed to the people to make decisions. He stated how the Scriptures foretell the resurrection, how the works of Christ prove that He is Lord and Christ, and how the resurrection itself gives additional credence to all he said Christ is. Being "pricked in their heart" the people asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter exhorted them to "repent, and be baptized."

Philip, witnessing to the Ethiopian, interpreted the Book of Isaiah by relating facts in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. After his conversion Saul used the Scriptures and "confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ."

Mr. Krutza is pastor of the First Baptist Church in Galva, Ill. He has written before for THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY.

It is safe to say that wherever people were called upon in the time of the Early Church to make life-changing decisions these were made through faith on the basis of knowledge, whether that knowledge was complete or incomplete. In his epistles Paul appealed for faith based upon logical conclusions. These conclusions can only be based upon facts, facts that reveal the very nature of God. One of the works of the Holy Spirit stated by Christ is that "he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). Also "he shall testify of me" (John 15:26). In testifying, one person makes known certain facts to another person. The work of the Spirit is to give us an intellectual concept upon which to exercise and establish our faith.

God has never withheld knowledge about Himself from those who diligently seek Him. One of the main reasons the early Christians were bold in faith is that they grasped the teachings of Christ and, in faith believing the facts, were able to withstand the enemy in confident assurance that the Lord would never forsake them.

In this life we are called upon to make thousands of decisions. Some of them involve no moral issues. We make minor decisions every day as we choose our clothing and food. Beyond these are decisions that involve moral and spiritual issues. In order to make the right moral or spiritual decisions we must know some of the facts involved. Otherwise we shall be taking a stab in the dark or will have to resort to what the world calls hunches.

There are Christians who argue that if we must have the facts about a certain situation we will be pre-

vented from deciding by faith. This has often been true of denominational workers who would like a pastor to take some church "on faith." They absolutely refuse to state any facts about the situation for fear that the man might refuse or for fear that the pastor might not be a future "yes" man to the denominational worker.

When you make a decision to do a certain task in spite of all circumstances, knowing that your faith is grounded firmly in the God who can overrule even the most adverse conditions, it solidifies that decision. To know nothing of the situation into which we go other than that we are going because someone else labels it a "faith" endeavor is not safe ground upon which to make a Christian decision.

Far more meaningful is the clear call of God to us to go to a place or do a work that we in ourselves would not choose to do. Many pastors could be saved the hours of heartache that come because they were uninformed of conditions existing in a church to which they are invited. If they go knowing the conditions, and this is possible in most denominational organizations where some worker has contact with the churches, they could plan their ministry from the very beginning to cope with them. Each pastor could begin his ministry upon a greater faith because he would be fortified through the knowledge of the situation, the knowledge of the mighty power of the Lord and through a previous decision based upon these factors.

Many Christians also could save themselves hours of future grief if they considered situations and tasks fully and prayerfully upon the known facts and the leadership of the Lord. They would not be faced later with the problem of determining whether they were out of or in the will of God. This would be previously determined. Many have had to learn some hard lessons because they were cocksure that what they were doing was the will of God. They later learned, through the consideration of the facts, that to continue would mean living in opposition to God's will.

Let it never be said that facts are a substitute for faith. Facts never have taken and never can take the place of faith. Facts have always been and will ever remain the supplement to faith. Facts have been the segments out of which the backbone of faith has been constructed. Faith matures as it incorporates facts; it also remains immature as it shuns facts. To be childlike in faith has too often been made to be synonymous with being childish. Childlikeness in faith is a humility of spirit even though we possess knowledge.

To have knowledge or the facts does not mean that we will not have faith. Our hope of the future, or should we say our faith in the future, is based upon facts. Many of these facts are in the form of promises made by the Lord. Again, many of these facts will be fully known only when we shall appear in glory, but they are partially revealed to us in the present for our edification and stability. What more glorious facts can be presented to bolster our faith than those given concerning the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?

If we are to follow in the New Testament pattern we will base our Christian decisions upon all the facts that can be known about any situation or task and upon the faith that comes out of earnest prayer which incorporates these facts. Until, through prayer, the Holy Spirit establishes our faith upon such facts so that we have an absolute conviction and confidence that this is the will of God for us, we have no right to make a positive Christian decision. When our conviction becomes absolute about our situation or task we can be sure that this is a genuine Christian decision.

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Meeting of the General Society

A meeting of the members of the General Society is hereby called to take place on Friday, May 17, 1957, at 1:30 P. M., in the First Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, in connection with the meeting of the General Council of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, for the purpose of electing delegates to Council by adopting the report of the Council Committee on Credentials and to conduct such other business as may properly come before this body.

W. T. Smalley
Secretary.

Quotes from Our Contemporaries

To those women who still believe homemaking is a divine calling, Oliver G. Wilson in *The Wesleyan Methodist* offers a word of encouragement:

"Make your front step a pulpit from which sound words of cheer and comfort to all who come thereto. Make your kitchen table a communion table, your daily round of duties a walk in the temple of God."

Guard against "entertainmentism" in evangelism, warns Kenneth H. Good in *Christian Victory:*

"Mix together an unending parade of star performers whose notoriety has been achieved upon what they can do or have done, add a liberal quantity of syncopated rhythm, spice the mixture with clever quips, high-school slang and a generous sprinkling of jokes, prepare the potion under such high-pressure and extravagant advertising as befits Hollywood, and the resultant brew is sufficient to effectively thwart all attempts at scriptural revival and true evangelism. Yet in almost every direction today we observe this tendency in various states of development."

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The Lord Reigneth

PSALM 93

By RAYMOND N. STUMPF

AN old shepherd in Scotland, while leading his flock to pasture one day, noticed a young man examining through a microscope one of the dainty wild flowers which covered the hillsides of that locality.

"And what might you be doing, laddie?" asked the shepherd, smiling. Indeed the man looked rather foolish, intently studying a common wild flower. In reply the youth beckoned the shepherd to have a look. The smile gave way to an expression of wonder as the old man gazed through the lens at this common flower now resplendent in all its minute beauty and symmetry. Finally he turned to the young man, tears upon his cheeks, and exclaimed, "How beautiful! And to think that I have unknowingly trampled thousands of them."

How often are beautiful things unconsciously trampled underfoot because they have become commonplace! We cast an admiring glance at brilliant autumn leaves, but when do we pause long enough to hold a single leaf and, beholding the glory of God, worship Him? After hastily reading from God's Word in our morning devotions how often we offer a brief prayer and dash off to work unaware of the glorious truths He has hidden there for thoughtful meditation. The passage may be so familiar that we scarcely have to read it, but we leave with an empty heart because we have quickly passed over that which has become common.

Such a gem of truth is Psalm 93. Times without number I had read these words, missing the glorious rays of spiritual light which they emit, until one night I took time to meditate.

"The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved."

In the first three words we behold the gem of truth which is seen in varied beauty and brilliance throughout the psalm, "the Lord reigneth." Here is a fact as real as the sun which rules the heavens and a law as unchanging as the law of gravity. "The worlds were framed by the word of God." "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." The psalmist contemplating these truths exclaims, "He is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself."

We gaze with wonder upon the visible manifestations of God's majesty and strength in the universe. We trace them in the delicate petals of a pansy and in towering redwood forests. We feel them in gentle summer breezes and in salty spray caused by mighty waves which thunder endlessly against indomitable rocks. We sense them in the microscopic world which surrounds us and in the movements of heavenly bodies as they travel with unerring precision along their ancient courses. A hymn writer has expressed our lofty thoughts in these words:

O Lord my God! when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder;
Thy power throughout the universe displayed,
When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
And hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze;
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee;
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

The psalmist added more brilliance to the central truth with the words, "The world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved." Where the Lord reigns supreme all things move in compliance with the will of God. Confusion and disorder are banished by the exercise of God's will. When light shone upon the chaotic world, which was without form and void, every life-giving process was set in motion. The world enveloped by the light was gradually transformed into a garden by the word of God as every vestige of chaos gave place to His Lordship.

God brought order to this world and established its laws by the exercise of His Lordship over His material creation. He does the same for His children who are His new creation in Christ. He is Lord by virtue of creation; He is also Lord by virtue of redemption.

As surely as fruit forms on the branch after the blossom has shed forth its beautiful testimony of new

Mr. Stumpf is on furlough from Japan. He will be returning to the field within the next few months.

life within, so the fruit of righteousness should appear in the life after a person confesses that Christ is Lord. His Lordship, however, does not go uncontested. Satan, who for years has reigned in the heart, will not abdicate the throne without a struggle.

"The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves." A thousand voices thunder in like mighty waves which ever threaten to dislodge the Lord Jesus from the throne of the heart.

Where the Lord reigns there will be conformity to His will. Christ, not man, is our example. The Word of God, not human reason, is our blueprint. The Holy Spirit, not worldly methods, is the One through whom His work is done. Nevertheless, in spite of how well we know these facts and how heartily we approve them, none of us can boast that we are beyond the influence of those multitudes of voices which unceasingly whisper to our hearts, "Be conformed to this world. What will others say if you take such a stand? Don't be so strict and take God too literally. Others who are well accepted in the church do this, so why not you? What harm can it do?" There has never been a Christian who has determined in his heart to enthrone Christ as Lord of his life who has not heard these voices, nor can anyone say, "I never heeded them." We all have cried with the psalmist, "O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice."

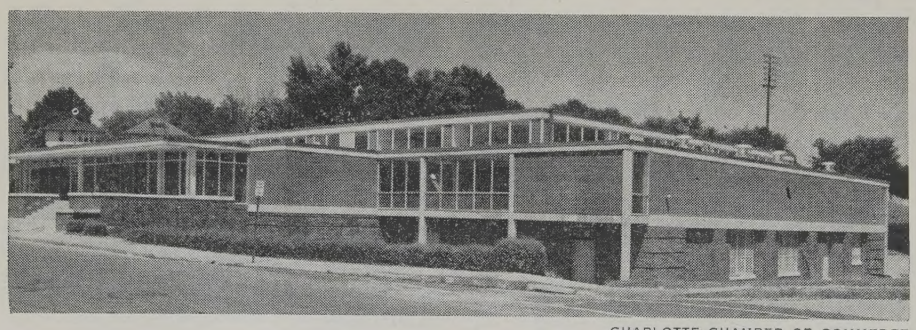
Thoughtful reflection will reveal how often we blindly follow methods and programs without questioning their validity or worth in the light of Scripture. We simply accept the pattern laid down by others. The spiritual decay may be imperceivably slow and we are unaware of the increasing influence of these voices until some issue comes that challenges His Lordship. If we follow the Lord's voice we will be misunderstood by others. If we yield to the voice of the enemy we will grieve the Spirit. We recoil from facing the difficulty of living a life separated entirely to Christ and His will. The heart becomes cold, our faith weak, and Christ no longer reigns supreme.

But before the trembling heart is completely submerged by the flood of voices the Spirit whispers, "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." As the beams of a powerful light shining across stormy seas guides a ship to a haven of rest, these words shine forth to reassure a faltering Christian. Only with Christ exalted upon the throne of a heart will the voice of the Lord be heard above the roar of voices about it.

When the voice of the Lord was saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" the ears of Isaiah were not attuned at first to their frequency. But a national crisis occurred when King Uzziah died. No doubt there was much speculation about the twenty-five-year-old youth, Jotham, who was to succeed his father. What kind of king would he be? Would he be weak or strong, good or evil? Voices of fear and anxiety distressed the hearts of many. In this hour of crisis Isaiah saw the Lord. He was seated upon a throne high and lifted up; His train filled the temple, His glory filled the earth and His presence, manifested in a cloud, filled God's house. This awesome revelation of the Lord exposed the vileness of the prophet. Isaiah immediately caught the significance of this vision with regard to his own life.

When God is exalted upon the throne of a heart the whole being is filled with His glory. The storm of doubt and fear and the waves of voices which threaten to overwhelm the soul will be silenced in the presence of God. Crying out in anguish, Isaiah abhorred himself and an angel flew down and cleansed his lips with fire from off the sacred altar. Then suddenly the static of voices was hushed in solemn silence and Isaiah's ears were tuned to heaven's frequency. He intercepted a message which the Lord had been urgently sending earthward. For how long, he did not know. But now it came in clearly, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Eagerly Isaiah cried, "Here am I; send me."

Sad it is to go week after week without hearing the voice of the Lord. Sadder still to flounder in the sea of life threatened with shipwreck by the floods of confusing voices. To one in such a state the message of the psalm bears hope. "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Established upon the Rock, there is a song in our hearts, even praise unto our God. Seated together in heavenly places with Christ, we live in the holy hush of God's divine presence which shuts out the confusing voices of this world. The closing words of Psalm 93 are a fitting benediction: "Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever." ◆ ◆ ◆



CHARLOTTE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Park Center Auditorium, Charlotte, N. C.

The General Council of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, meeting in Charlotte, N. C., May 15-21, will hold its evening and Sunday services in Park Center. (Wednesday, May 15, and Monday, May 20, services will be held in the First Baptist Church.) Park Center is Charlotte's newest downtown auditorium, with a seating capacity of 2,700. The building is air conditioned.

Rev. C. A. Epperson will bring the opening address of the Council. Other speakers are: Dr. C. C. Warren, president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Dr. J. Sidlow Baxter, of Edinburgh; Dr. J. T. Zamrazil, Dr. H. L. Turner, Dr. A. W. Tozer, Rev. D. T. Anderson and Rev. C. H. Erickson. Missionary speakers are Rev. R. M. Chrisman, Miss Carolyn Griswold and Rev. Arnold Ratzloff. Dr. R. R. Brown will conduct the missionary meeting on Sunday afternoon at 2:30.

DAVID R. ENLOW, Editor

AT HOME

Methodist evangelist speaks on Boston Common: Dr. Alan Walker, Australian Methodist evangelist, spoke to a group on Boston Common in the first of four weekly Christian demonstrations he will hold there. Dr. Walker is serving as Visiting Professor of Homiletics and Evangelism at Boston University until June. He recently completed a year-long Mission to America sponsored by The Methodist Church. In August he will leave for Europe to conduct missions in Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland, England and Ireland.

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Church-related colleges now total 744: A total of 744 of the 1,886 colleges and universities in the United States are controlled by religious groups, the U. S. office of Education reported. There are 474 Protestant colleges and universities, 265 Roman Catholic and five Jewish, the agency said in its annual Education Directory.

ABROAD

Dutch church leaders condemn Sunday card playing: Leaders of the Netherlands Reformed Church, in a statement at Barneveld, condemned what they said was the growing habit of Sunday card playing among church members. The statement warned that the practice might affect religious and family life by causing a neglect of children and spiritual needs.

●

Christians thrive in Far East: Hollington K. Tong, Free China's ambassador to the United States, reports that "half the Christians in China have refused to obey" Communist government directives and are "conducting their worship services in secret." Despite severe persecution, he also reported, Christian missions are "thriving" on Formosa. There are, the ambassador said, six times as many Christians on the Nationalist-held island now than prior to World War II, approximately one-quarter million out of a population of ten million.

MISSIONS

Some missionaries returning to Near East: The latest word on missionary activity in the troubled Near East is that some mission work is starting again. An official for the Church Missionary Society says that British educational missionaries are returning to Jordan, but not to Egypt, at least, not yet. Asia Secretary of the mission organization, C. S. Milford, says two missionaries have now been invited to return to Jordan and several workers for the Jerusalem and the East Mission have returned.

●

Congo printing plant gets addition: Missionary Kathryn Willems, of Corn, Okla., assisted by native Christians, operates the printing plant sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren Church at Kafumba station in the Belgian Congo. A new addition recently dedicated will greatly facilitate the ministry of the printed page in that part of the Congo. Considerable literature has been produced by Miss Willems' small press at Kafumba. In 1956, for example, jobs included printing of 3,500 gospel tracts, 1,000 copies of the Gospel of John, more than 10,000 schoolbooks and thousands of cards for school, medical and church records.

PEOPLE

Name new Australian Presbyterian moderator: Rev. D. J. Flockart, prominent New South Wales clergyman, has been named moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, it was announced at Sydney, Australia. He will take over from Rev. Frank W. Rolland, seventy-eight-year-old outgoing moderator, when the church holds its triennial General Assembly at Melbourne in September.

PEOPLE SAY

Dr. Clyde W. Taylor, Secretary of Public Affairs of the National Association of Evangelicals, upon his return from an eleven-day tour of Northeast Air Command bases of the United States Air Force: "The proportion of chaplains to the number of men on each base seems to be generally satisfactory. I think that if a generalization can be made as to any inadequacy it would be in the matter of personal religion. I found myself continually stressing that Christianity is not churchianity. It is a vital personal relationship between God and man through Jesus Christ."

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Hermann N. Morse, general secretary of the Presbyterian Church's Board of National Missions: "Let the Christian Church stand still for one moment and the world would move off and leave it. Isolationism is just a pure myth. Like rugged individualism, it is a word used only in a political campaign."

THE PRESS

Magazine celebrates twentieth anniversary: The first present-day American Christian monthly magazine for parents has passed its twentieth milestone. According to Editor Martin P. Simon, "the relative youth of *The Christian Parent* points up the change that has come over one angle of church life—the greater interest in parent and family life training." The anniversary issue of *The Christian Parent* includes on eight inside pages a reproduction of the first issue. Copies of the anniversary issue of *The Christian Parent* are available as long as the supply lasts. Write The Christian Education Co., Highland, Ill.

WELDON B. BLACKFORD, Editor

Are You Preparing for AYF Camp?

It is time for all AYFers to consider seriously plans for a week at the summer AYF camp in your district. Many have already joined a district-wide camp saving plan and are well on the way in paying for a week at camp.

Some churches are paying half the cost of a week at camp for any AYFer who memorizes a certain number of Scripture verses before camp begins. Our camps throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico will supply you with program information. Most of this information has already been sent to our Alliance churches. The youth page of THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY will soon carry a complete directory of 1957 AYF camp information.

Rev. Warren MacEachern, Youth Secretary of the Eastern District, recently suggested seven reasons why AYFers should attend an AYF camp this summer:

1. *Fellowship.* There is no other place in all the world where the fellowship exceeds that to be found at a Christian youth camp. One week of varied activities with fellows and girls of your own age will give you the kind of Christian fellowship you are looking for.

2. *Friendship.* Lifelong friendships have been started at a summer youth camp. Some friendships have matured into true love, and today there are happy Christian homes as a result of an early friendship at an AYF camp.

3. *Atmosphere.* Did you ever wish you could live in a place where you could escape the trashy influence of the world? The AYF camp offers you an entire week away from the undesirable things of the world. You will spend your time at a place where Jesus Christ is continually exalted.

4. *Recreation.* Young people want to enjoy a good time physically during vacation. AYF camps are organized with a good variety of sports and there is never a dull moment for those who seek activity. Recreation is part of the daily program.

5. *Service.* The morning hours are generally devoted to seminars and chapel. These are important periods of spiritual instruction. The evening program emphasizes a lively evangelistic program. Many living for Christ today found Him at camp.

6. *Counseling.* Godly counselors are ready twenty-four hours a day to help you with a spiritual need or problem. Many campers have solved some of their most pressing problems with the spiritual advice of a Christian counselor.

7. *Growth.* The Word of God tells us to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord . . . Jesus Christ." AYFers who are defeated in their Christian life, or unsaved, usually find the joy of the Lord flooding their soul by the end of a camp week. They return home with a new determination to serve God and do His will.

You ask "Why a youth camp?" These are just seven reasons, but there are many more. Each AYFer is a reason for a youth camp. Plan to attend youth camp this year. Get your ticket to an AYF summer camp *today!*

AYF Guide

Bible Reading Plan for School Days

May 13-17

Monday . . . . . Genesis 35
Tuesday . . . . . Psalm 38
Wednesday . . . . . Luke 7:30-50
Thursday . . . . . Psalm 86
Friday . . . . . Acts 20:22-38

1957 Contest Corner

A devotional service that gets an A-plus rating doesn't just happen. It is the result of good planning on the part of the program committee. This committee will work to see that the weekly meetings measure up to the purposes for which they are held. These purposes are:

1. To give teen-age youth a chance to develop spiritual strength through worshiping together.

2. To use the abilities of youth in Christian service.

3. To win youth outside the church to Christ and the Christian way of living.

4. To give youth a chance to express what they know about the Christian faith and how to put it into practice.

Check your weekly programs at these points:

1. A period of worship in each meeting.

2. Every member frequently taking part by singing, speaking or helping in other ways.

3. Unchurched youth becoming interested in your fellowship because of the quality of your services.

4. The meetings resulting in helping the members become better Christians.

What grade does your fellowship make in this brief test? If the grade is not as high as you think it should be, likely a little harder work on the part of the officers and program committee will help raise the grade.—TEENSCRIPT, *Nazarene Young People's Society.*

NOTE: Keep sending your programs to National AYF Office, New York City. The 1957 Program Contest ends May 31.

Good News from Thailand

The blessing of God has rested on the field of Thailand throughout the past year. Reports to the conference bear testimony to that. The Thai church has progressed in its self-support program, seven new churches were opened and seventeen new group meetings were started. A total of eighteen pastors and sixty lay leaders are now self-supporting.

In forty-two Sunday schools there are 1,315 scholars. In 28 Bible conferences 714 persons were enrolled. Besides this, the two Bible schools (one for leprous people and one for well folk) were carried on during the year. Four short term Bible schools were held.

The recently inaugurated Bible correspondence course, so successful in India, shows that 4,453 persons have begun the study of the Gospel of John; 1,798 persons have completed it. Over 400 of these have signed and returned the affirmation at the end of the course, indicating that they have received the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour. Those who finish the course are sent the first lessons of the recently published course in the Book of Acts; 803 persons have begun this course and already 293 of them have finished it. A course in the Gospel of Luke is now being prepared.

In the radio work, half-hour programs in Thai have been on the air morning and evening. Chinese (Swatow dialect) programs of fifteen minutes each have been aired throughout the year. Besides producing these programs, we have been able to record the programs for our brethren in Laos, across the border.

Our literature department has turned out a total of 542,000 copies of books, booklets and tracts, in all about 14,799,530 pages. Many new books and tracts have been printed, and a translation of the Topical Textbook has been prepared. It is now ready for the printer.

The recent census shows a population in our field of 8,499,289, an increase of 572 persons per day since the last census. Compared to the few who are born again, this number is like a flood. The figures do not show the whole picture, however. The greater over-all knowledge of Christianity in this country, the large numbers of inquirers, Sunday school scholars and Bible correspondence course enrollees, together with our enlarged expectancy in God, indicate a glorious future for the work.

During these conference days we have enjoyed the rich ministry of Dr. R. R. Brown, of Omaha, Nebraska. His messages were God's Word to our own hearts, and through them we were refreshed and blessed. We thank God for sending Dr. Brown to us.

Pictured Below

First Row *(l. to r.): Messrs. J. W. Nabors, J. I. Perkins, L. B. Gold, W. D. Hardy, R. H. Johnston, W. D. Carlsen.*

Second Row: *Miss E. M. Barrett, Mrs. J. W. Nabors, Mrs. H. G. Boese, Mrs. J. I. Perkins, Mrs. P. W. Gunther, Dr. R. R. Brown, Mrs. P. A. Voth, Mrs. A. B. Case, Mrs. E. A. Truax, Mrs. P. S. Davis, Mrs. W. W. Kerr.*

Third Row: *Mrs. L. B. Gold, Miss M. J. Ellenberger, Mrs. C. L. Gardner, Mrs. N. C. Webber, Mrs. C. R. Dreger, Miss I. G. Hearn, Miss D. H. Wilson, Mrs. R. W. Tompkins, Mrs. E. J. Sahlberg, Mrs. M. Martin.*

Fourth Row: *G. W. T. Miess, C. L. Gardner, Mrs. W. D. Hardy, Mrs. R. H. Johnston, Mrs. W. D. Carlsen, Miss H. E. Warden, Mrs. W. Persons, Miss S. M. Ratzloff, Miss B. M. Gattis, Mrs. G. W. T. Miess, P. A. Voth, H. G. Boese.*

Back: *Messrs. N. C. Webber, E. A. Truax, W. W. Kerr, R. W. Tompkins, E. J. Sahlberg, W. Persons, P. W. Gunther, A. B. Case, M. Martin, P. S. Davis, C. R. Dreger.*

The Thailand Missionary Conference, with Dr. R. R. Brown (seated, center)

The Monkey God

By MRS. E. G. JACOBER, *India*

One day we saw a young boy who had been painted and powdered a light tan. His face was masked with thick lips, a flat nose and slanting eyes. He was dressed in a pair of red trunks and had a long curving tail which bobbed up and down as he danced. Drums beat a tense, throbbing rhythm and the crowd which gathered was worked up into a state of frenzy. This was one of the many Hindu religious celebrations, and the boy was representing Hanuman, the monkey god of India.

Not far from our compound there is a temple dedicated to the monkey god. Every Saturday it is filled with people who come from all directions to pray to their chosen idol. A hired band, dressed in shorts and turbans, plays horns, drums and bagpipes to attract attention. Invariably a row of beggars lines the path which leads to the temple doors. Sometimes a blind man is there, playing "You Are My Sunshine" on his little wooden flute, hoping to receive a penny from someone.

Crowds of wealthy, educated men and women and of poor, unlearned families come in an array of ancient or modern automobiles, rattly buses, expensive taxis, bicycles or rickety horse-and-buggy contraptions. We met one old man who came twenty-five miles to see and worship the monkey idol. We met another English-speaking man who laughed scornfully at the tract we handed him. "God is in me, in us, in everything. I don't need to worship," he said. "But do you go to the monkey temple?" asked a missionary. "Well, yes. God is in me, God is in the monkey. I just go there to show that God is in the monkey," he replied.

The grounds surrounding the temple look like a picnic area. There are benches occupied by mischievous monkeys as well as by tired people. Drinking water is available and people bring their lunches and sit on the ground in groups to eat and visit. Balloons are sold for the children. The big gray, black-faced monkeys, realizing it is the place for handouts, sit around on the grass placidly or lope here and there looking quizzically at people who carry packages. A dozen pushcarts offer succulent varieties of food, most of which is purchased and fed to the animals for religious merit. The monkeys actually reach up and take bits of food right out of a person's hand.

HARRINGTON—THREE LIONS

At Madras' famous Hindu temple this pilgrim brushes a flower across the head of an idol

One day we saw two men feeding the monkeys very choice food. They had come on their bicycles from a village two miles away, and because it was the time of the full moon, as well as the eclipse, they made it a special occasion for performing this act of merit. They carried two large burlap bags filled with food weighing over forty pounds. First they fed the monkeys *lardavas,* which are large round sweet balls, deliciously rich and considered a special treat. Then they brought out *poories,* a round, flat, sweet bread made of wheat flour and syrup fried in oil. They had forty dozen! As they entered the city, they fed each group of monkeys they met and finally emptied their bags at the monkey temple, having fed more than a hundred and fifty monkeys altogether.

We said to these religious men, "Why are you doing this?" One of them answered, "For merit." These people believe that if a person's good deeds outweigh his bad ones, in the next birth he will be promoted to a higher position instead of demoted to a lower form of animal, vegetable or mineral life. We wondered how merit could be obtained in this case, when they had undoubtedly used rationed wheat flour as well as broken the city rule of not feeding the monkeys! Then we said, "Didn't this food cost a great deal?" But their devout answer was, "We count no cost when it is for God!"

The temple itself is an insignificant little building painted blue. Above the archway is inscribed in large letters, "Victory to Hanuman." Garlands of flowers or holy leaves are strung from pillar to post, and from the temple top waves a flag,

identifying it as a place of worship. Just inside the door a large brass bell hangs within reach of everyone. As people enter or leave they ring the bell. Along the sides of the walls are pictures and miniature figures depicting the mythical story of the god Ram and his servant Hanuman.

It is believed, according to the ancient myth, that the god Ram's wife was kidnaped by an enemy, who carried her away in an aerial car. But as they fled overhead, the woman threw her scarf and jewelry down to a band of monkeys in the jungle. When Ram went in search of his wife he met these monkeys and they agreed to help him rescue her. In the ensuing war, the leader of this monkey band became Ram's devoted ally. So today his image is held in sacred esteem and universally admired, the symbol of physical strength, ungrudging service and unquestioning loyalty. A modern Hindu, however, remarked that worship of the monkey god is like paying a bribe to a servant in order to get what you want from the master. It is the use of a mediator, which in this case is a monkey. God's Word says, "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

Towards the front of the temple are dozens of lights, each painted in red with the name "Ram." They flash on and off to dazzle and attract worshipers. There is a railing at the front where the people give the priest money, flowers to decorate the idol, and coconuts, the holy offering of food. The idol itself is a silver color, with painted eyes and dozens of flower garlands draped around its neck. Worshipers come to look at it and pray for strength. Their reasons for offering money, food and prayer are to nourish the god, to expiate sins and to obtain what is desired. Sometimes they pray, "O Hanuman grandfather, if thou wilt make a certain man to give me money, then I will come back and offer a coconut to thee."

As people leave they again ring the bell and, using a red paste, place a round mark the size of a large pea in the middle of their forehead to signify that they have been to worship. At the close of the day, with heaps of coconut shells piled at the back of the building and a good day's business done, the proprietor closes the temple, striking the bell which is rung not only to wake up the god in the morning, but to put him to sleep at night!

Our hearts grow heavy as we watch these people worshiping such an idol. We are endeavoring to reach them with the gospel. An Indian evangelist goes to the temple regularly to sell gospel literature to the long lines of people who wait for buses. And we are happy that each week, when the worshipers are passing in and out of the temple, one of them, a Hindu man whom we met and witnessed to about Jesus, makes his way past the throng and comes to our home to sit and talk. He is a student of the Hindu scriptures, and says, "I am the Lord. Heaven is in me, I am in heaven right now. I am my own little world." Then, his cracked lips oozing with red betel nut juice, he admits, "Nowadays we must seek and search for the truth." We have told him, "Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.'" We have been giving him the gospel message and trust that the Spirit of God may bring him to a place of surrender to Christ. His name is Mr. Dave.

And may the Lord help us as we preach to these people of the true sacrifice, made once and for all, when our Saviour died on the cross. May they learn that the sacrifices of God are not coconuts, but "a broken and contrite heart." May they learn that the true advocate before God is not a monkey, but "Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

O Spirit of the Living God

O Spirit of the living God
In all Thy plenitude of grace,
Where'er the foot of man hath trod,
Descend on our apostate race.

Give tongues of fire and hearts of love,
To preach the reconciling word;
Give power and unction from above,
Where'er the joyful sound is heard.

O Spirit of the Lord, prepare
All the round earth her God to meet;
Breathe Thou abroad like morning air,
Till hearts of stone begin to beat.

—JAMES MONTGOMERY.

In Everything Giving Thanks

By REV. LESLIE W. COLE, *Ecuador*

A year ago Roberto Sanchez, his wife and three children followed the Lord in baptism. What a change the gospel has brought to their home. They all are glad that Don Roberto's brother went to the coast and brought back a Bible which has opened a new way of life to many of the folk in Segovia, tiny town in the Andes.

The gospel has changed their home and personal lives, but in many ways life has not been easier for them since they became Christians. Their neighbors constantly disapprove their leaving the old ways and customs to walk with the "devils."

A week after the Sanchez family was baptized their good milk cow was stolen, a tremendous loss to this family of eight who have only three head of cattle and half a dozen sheep and two pigs. To make up the loss Don Roberto and his nineteen-year-old son went to the jungles to work. While they were gone the baby took suddenly sick and died. There was no way to let the father know and it was not until two months later when he came home that he heard the sad news. Did they doubt God and begin to wonder if the neighbors were right after all? No, they didn't. Comparing themselves with Job, they came through victoriously.

This year Manuel Campos and his wife, Rosa, were also baptized. Three days later while Manuel was on a trip to collect a debt, thieves broke into their house during the night and carried off all of their possessions. They beat Rosa and one of the little girls, leaving them with only the clothes on their backs. If Manuel had been there Rosa says he would no doubt have been killed.

When Manuel returned home Sunday morning he learned what had happened but he came to church with the Scripture reading all picked out for the pastor, Matthew 6:14-34, which speaks of forgiving those who wrong us and of laying up treasures in heaven where thieves do not break through and steal. Manuel is interested in going to Bible school. These simple country folk are learning to give thanks in everything. Through much tribulation do they enter the kingdom of heaven.

CLIFFORD E. HARROD, Reporter

News reports may be sent direct to Rev. C. E. Harrod, The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, East and Lane Streets, Raleigh, N. C.

Personalia

Rev. Henry Rathert, licensed evangelist of the Northwestern District, sailed for Germany on April 24, accompanied by his wife and their son, David. Mr. Rathert plans to spend three years in Germany in evangelistic ministry. Both Mr. and Mrs. Rathert attended the St. Paul Bible Institute. They request the prayers of The Alliance Family.

Rev. Roy Forward, former missionary to Ecuador, is now available for missionary evangelism and revival meetings and has a few dates open for this summer and fall. He may be reached at 1619 South Osceola St., Orlando, Fla.

With the Lord

On March 13, *Mr. John Arbitter,* faithful layman and member of Central Church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, Detroit, Mich., for more than thirty years, went to be with the Lord. He was eighty-four years old. As was his custom for many years, he had driven forty-eight miles to church services the previous Sunday.

When younger, Mr. Arbitter carried on effective ministries in opening work in Mount Clemens and Ypsilanti, Mich., giving both time and money to these pioneer efforts. He was known to a wide circle of Alliance workers through his faithful attendance at the summer conferences at Beulah Beach, Ohio. Tribute to his devotion to Christ was paid at the funeral service in Central Church by the pastor, Rev. T. E. Thompson. He is survived by his wife, Lydia; fourteen children and thirty-two grandchildren, as well as twenty-one great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Juniata Valley Prayer Groups Meet

The missionary prayer bands of the Juniata Valley, Pa., met in Paintersville, Pa., on March 7. Mrs. W. C. Neff presided. Miss Miriam Stephens, missionary to Ecuador, gave a stirring message in the morning, and in the afternoon showed a film depicting the story of the five young missionaries who were killed by the Aucas a year ago. A time of prayer followed. Musical numbers were given by the groups from Lewistown, Mt. Union and Reedsville.

Dr. Turner Ministers in Holland

About one hundred Alliance friends met in Amerongen, Holland, the week end of March 23 and 24 to hear Dr. H. L. Turner, who with Mrs. Turner was returning from a visit to our missions in Africa. Dr. Turner brought refreshing Bible messages and fresh missionary reports from the field.

On Saturday Mr. deGraaf, chairman of the Alliance Committee, gave reports of the year's work, including the sending of missionaries to New Guinea. Rev. Willem Konemann, C. & M. A. representative in the Netherlands, has aroused much prayer interest for the work of our missionaries.

A group of Alliance missionaries studying in Belgium was also present: Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Hotalen, Misses Anna Rempel and Lorraine Johnson, and Rev. Arni Shareski.

Revival Refreshes Two Churches

The congregations of the Ansonia Community Church, R.F.D., Wellsboro, Pa., and The Christian and Missionary Chapel, Galeton, Pa., experienced revival refreshing during special meetings held at the former church by Rev. W. G. McVicker, Bellefonte, Pa., March 5 through 17. Mrs. Clara Lehmann, who serves both churches, writes, "The messages were powerful and accompanied by pungent conviction brought of the Holy Spirit. God used His Word to bring backsliders to Himself and give them victorious testimonies." Some professed salvation, others were delivered from sinful habits. Sunday morning services were conducted in the Galeton church and proved to be very fruitful.

Church Organized in Salisbury, N. C.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Salisbury, N. C., was formally organized with special services on March 17. The congregation had been a branch, but now becomes an organized church of the Society.

In the morning service the pastor, Rev. M. Howard Cashatt, and the district superintendent, Rev. R. L. Staley, received the congregation into membership. A service of dedication was held in the afternoon, as officers were set apart for the Lord's service. In addition to Mr. Cashatt and Mr. Staley, Rev. Charles Wisser, of Lexington, N. C., and Mr. E. R. Hunter, of High Point, N. C., participated.

Ohio Women Hold Spring Rally

The women of the Mansfield, Ohio, Christian and Missionary Alliance Church entertained the spring rally of 120 delegates representing the twelve churches of the Central Ohio District

(Continued on page 15)

Letters

Ambiguity Resulted

Relative to the article by Dale Drowley ("The Missionary's Struggle with Darkness," April 10), there is a misstatement that ought to be retracted for the sake of any who might be misled.

The author says, speaking of people in Japan: "Many believe that a person can become a Christian apart from personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour." The statement that follows is the one in question: "Of course this is true to a certain extent here in America, but in a land which has been steeped in paganism, idolatry and religious externalism for centuries, confusion is added to confusion."

The objectionable statement is that he would assert that here in America one could be saved without repentance and faith in Jesus.

These are the prime essentials of the Christian faith and cannot be eliminated, though the line of demarcation between the old nature and the new is not as sharp in the case of a moralist as an outbroken sinner.

Nevertheless, "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21) are the foundational tenets of the Christian faith and no one is born into God's family without them.—Mrs. Mary Crunkilton, *Mansfield, Ohio.*

• It *is* true that in America, as well as in Japan, "many people believe that a person can become a Christian apart from personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour." The author does not say that what they believe is true.

Penetrating Insight

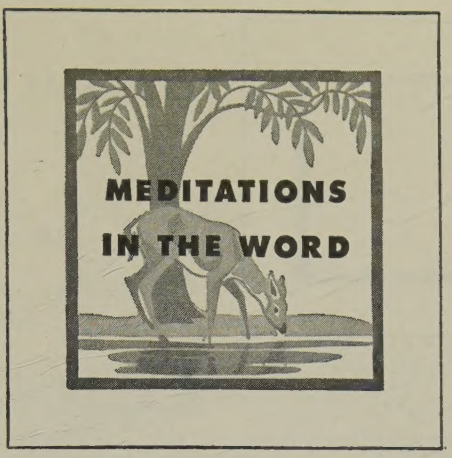
The blessings of The Alliance Weekly still continue for us. Your article, "The Key to Human Life Is Theological" (March 20), finally prompted me again to write. Many other fine editorials and other choice material have come to us through the Weekly.

May God continually use this paper for His glory. Keen analysis and penetrating insight into the real meaning and value of serving God have been the outstanding characteristics of the magazine.—Pastor John Eumurian, *Sparta, Wisc.*

Used Stamps Help Missions

Used postage stamps of all denominations, both domestic and foreign, can be used profitably by the committee in charge of Spanish publications for Latin America. Stamps are sorted and sold and the profits used in publishing gospel literature. United States commemorative issues are always salable.

Young people in Colombia will prepare the stamps for sale. Do not attempt to remove the stamps from the envelope but leave a good margin around them. Send by *first class letter packet* to Rev. R. M. Searing, Apartado 624, Cali, Valle, Colombia.



Compiled by EDITH M. BEYERLE

Sunday

READING—Matthew 20:20-28.
TEXT—*"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"* (verse 22).

In natural things, value is expressed by rarity and cost. Pearls do not grow on trees. . . . The laurel of fame does not hang on every branch along the way. . . . All these things are the recompense of labor, self-denial and often great suffering. And so the highest spiritual things are costly things. . . . Satan does not dispute our way over the plains of average blessing, but when we ascend to higher altitudes we find his principalities and powers disputing our advance. . . . If you come into the more delicate shades of Christian experience you shall have to know the heaviest touches of the adversary's hand. If you are to sit with Christ upon His throne you must go with Him through Gethsemane.—A. B. SIMPSON.

Pray for The Island World; Eastern, South Pacific Districts, Mexico.

Monday

READING—Matthew 5:20-30.
TEXT—*"Be reconciled to thy brother"* (verse 24).

Jesus said a thing that we are likely to forget. He said that when we come to the altar to worship God and remember that we have . . . wronged a brother, the first thing to do is to go and apologize and be reconciled. What Jesus said was not incidental but fundamental. It is a major Christian virtue, this willingness and promptness to apologize for wrongs done to others. . . . All through the Bible this truth is emphasized. Forgiveness is a duty and so is confession of fault. James says, "Confess your faults one to another." "Go . . .; first be reconciled," said Jesus. The Lord wills it. We will obey and pray that we may have sufficient grace to apologize.—THE PROSPECTOR.

Pray for India; Western Pennsylvania District, Puerto Rico, Jewish Work.

Tuesday

READING—Psalm 51.
TEXT—*"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts"* (verse 6).

True repentance produces full restitution as far as is possible on the part of the offender. The Levitical law demanded a "fifth part more" as interest to the total amount of ill-gotten gain. But with divine grace in the heart, the conscientious soul will voluntarily confess his wrongs of the past and repay in full, both principal and interest as the Holy Spirit directs him! . . . Said Charles Finney, "The thief has not repented who keeps the money he stole. He may have conviction, but no repentance. . . . If you have cheated anyone and do not restore what you have taken unjustly, or if you have injured anyone and do not set about to undo the wrong as far as lies in you, you have not truly repented." God . . . demands "truth in the inward parts."—A. J. BAUGHEY.

Pray for Africa; Western, Western Canadian, Southeastern Districts.

Wednesday

READING—Mark 6:30-44.
TEXT—*"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while"* (verse 31).

"Come ye yourselves apart . . ., and rest a while,"
The way is weary and the toil is long;
Come, linger in the sunshine of His smile,
And gather strength to meet the woe and wrong.
Come, these brief moments, freed from sin and care,
Shall make you strong the heavy load to bear.

. . . . . .

Come, seek your Lord and ponder o'er His will.
Come, drink the wine and eat the broken bread,
Meet emblems of the strength ye so much need.

—MARY B. WHITING.

Pray for Indo-China, Thailand; Northeastern, Eastern and Central Canadian Districts.

Thursday

READING—Isaiah 41:10-20.
TEXT—*"I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth* (verse 15).

What harder stuff or harder grain for threshing out than high and rocky mountains? But the saints are God's threshing instruments, to beat them all into chaff. Are we not God's leem vessels? and yet when they cast us over a house we are not broken into shreds. We creep in under our Lord's wings in the great shower and the water cannot come through. It is folly for men to say, "This is not Christ's plea, He will lose the wadset [pawn]; men are like to beguile Him": that were indeed a strange play. Nay, I dare pledge my soul and lay it in pawn on Christ's side of it. . . . Let fools laugh the fool's laughter and scorn Christ, . . . we may sing . . . even in our winter-storm, in the expectation of a summer sun. . . . No created powers in hell or out of hell can mar the music of our Lord Jesus, nor spoil our song of joy.—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

Pray for South America; Southwestern, Pacific Northwest Districts.

Friday

READING—Luke 21:28-38.
TEXT—*"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares"* (verse 34).

These words come as a solemn warning to the child of God in a day when even he may be overtaken in one or the other of these dangers to the soul. Especially is this true regarding the last menace, for probably every Christian must plead guilty to yielding to this temptation. It is so easy to do this when the everyday cares and even Christian service take on gigantic proportions. The days are so short and the duties so many that it is very difficult not to allow the "cares of this life" to crowd out things pertaining to spiritual growth. *Father, help us to be loosened from this world and as children of God look joyfully and expectantly to the day of our final redemption.*—PAMELA.

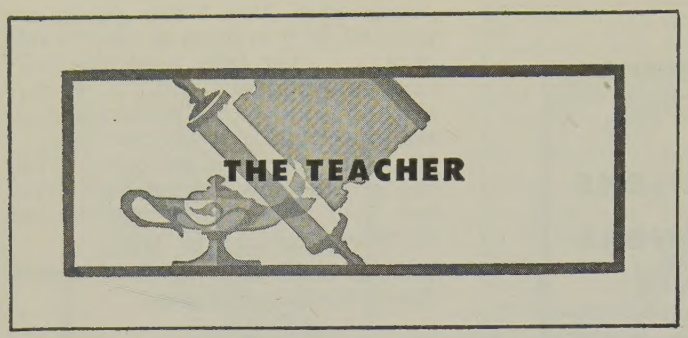
Pray for China, Hong Kong, Northwestern, New England Districts.

Saturday

READING—John 12:23-36.
TEXT—*"He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal"* (verse 25).

Every life has its natural desires which conflict with Christ. To the natural man love of self outweighs love for Christ. He is motivated in all his conduct by love of self. No man with that love supreme can be a disciple of Jesus Christ. That men and women have loved Christ more than their own lives has been demonstrated hundreds of times. This love has been responsible for martyr deaths. Dr. Robertson says, "Martyrdom is to be an ever-present possibility to the Christian, not to be courted but not to be shunned." Love for Christ is to take precedence over even the elemental instinct of self-preservation. Why were there martyrs? Because some loved not their own lives, even unto death. . . . Until the rise of Christianity not one of the Western languages had a word for self-denial. Nature's way is that of self-gratification; Christ's way is that of self-renunciation.—SELECTED.

Pray for Israel, Jordan, Syria; Central, South Atlantic Districts.



By DON J. KENYON

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON—MAY 19, 1957

Praying in an Evil World

Genesis 18:20-33; 19:29

DEVOTIONAL READING—Luke 11:1-13

GOLDEN TEXT—*"Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations."*—PSALM 82:8.

BACKGROUND AND LESSON ORIENTATION

God must teach His people that prayer must be uttered in the spirit of His will. Chapter 17 records Abraham's reaction to the announcement of Sarah's conception. It was beyond his spiritual capacity to see how God could effect this promise in their old age. His laugh was one of incredulity (17:17). In his extremity he pleaded for God to make His purpose valid in Ishmael. But Abraham was to mature in spirit until he saw the unreasonableness of this request. His growth is noted in the fact that he instituted the enforcement of the rite of circumcision in his household. His native hospitality is evidenced in the warmth with which he received the heavenly visitors. Once Abraham became God's vessel of election, his life became a channel of activity. He found himself swept into the current of redemption.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

The writer of Hebrews (13:2) alludes to Abraham's hospitality in Genesis 18. Somewhere in the process Abraham became aware of the nature of his heavenly guests. When they announced that Sarah was to be the mother of his son it was Sarah who this time resorted to laughter. When rebuked by the Lord she denied her guilt in fear. It was then she discovered that her God knew her secret thoughts. After the meeting in the tent the three visitors continued toward Sodom, with Abraham walking with them. It was agreed that he would be given knowledge of God's intention to destroy Sodom and Gommorah. It is at this precise and dramatic point that our lesson material begins. The sensitive spiritual nature of Abraham trustfully reached out to his God for help.

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE

1. *A Grave Announcement*—Genesis 18:20-22.
2. *A Desperate Intercession*—Genesis 18:23-33.
3. *A Faithful Deliverance*—Genesis 19:29.

KEY WORD ANALYSIS

(1) "Have done altogether" (18:21). This Hebrew expression is translated in the Greek Septuagint by *sunelountai* and may be rendered "completely correspond." God and His companions were going to find out by visiting these wicked cities whether the actual conditions were as evil as the reports made them.

(2) "Stood yet" (18:22), translated in the Septuagint as "still standing." What a picture of human desperation! Abraham knew that there was in the city a family that he loved. He stands as Aaron before the Lord between the living and the dead. Lot probably never knew what he owed to Abraham. Most worldlings are unaware of what they owe to those on praying ground.

COMMENTARY ON THE PRINTED TEXT

1. *A Grave Announcement* (Gen. 18: 20-22).

The injustices committed within these cities had been reported to God through the cries of the oppressed. Those whose moral natures had been effronted by the gross sins had called upon God for judgment. The cries of Lot who "vexed his righteous soul" with the lawlessness were among those which God was investigating.

One loathsome look at the manner in which the heavenly visitors were shamelessly treated in Sodom is enough to convince of the utter moral degeneracy. This investigation was not to inform God of what He certainly already knew; this visit and intercession were to stimulate a human need and provide a supernatural deliverance. It was already a settled matter with God that the city was doomed (v. 17).

This became Abraham's first lesson in relating himself to the will of God. The angels having departed, Abraham was left alone with God. This magnanimous man did not limit his intercession to Lot. He could have beseeched God directly for Lot's deliverance.

His appeal seems to have been to the justice of God. Was God to let the innocent suffer with the guilty? When Abraham became thoroughly convinced of the justice of God in His doom upon the cities, he then submitted himself to the God of justice and desisted from further prayer.

2. *A Desperate Intercession* (Gen. 18: 23-33).

Abraham's approach to God was earnest and desperate. God's dealing with him to this hour had been gracious and just. To destroy an entire city indiscriminately did not seem compatible with the revelation of God up to that time. Note that Abraham resigned himself at once to the authority of the announcement and the ability of God to make it good. He did not bicker with God in order to change His purpose. He appealed to God to remember mercy in wrath for the sake of those in Sodom that were not corrupted.

God knew that fifty, forty-five, etc., were not to be found. God was not being brought down to Abraham's level of justice. Abraham was being elevated to God's view of necessity for justice. When they were finished, God's decree stood but Abraham had gained inestimable knowledge of God's justice. To God the submission of man to His will is far more important than man can realize.

3. *A Faithful Deliverance* (Gen. 19: 29).

Just as God had decreed, "it came to pass." Lot's deliverance was irrevocably associated with God's covenant with Abraham, so it is significant that God virtually took Lot from Sodom by force.

This He did for Abraham's sake, not because Abraham had convinced Him he must. Any who hold that God submitted Himself to Abraham's bargaining have missed the entire point. Lot was beloved for his uncle's sake, not because he did wisely when he went to Sodom.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR LESSON PREPARATION

Praying in an evil world is an art which requires great spiritual discernment. It should be taught that we cannot ask God to transgress His justice and hatred for sin to satisfy our personal desires. One thing God wills to do: He takes sovereign steps to deal with the sinner. Emphasize God's forcible dealing with Lot. God destroyed Sodom. We must pray *in the will of God.*

THE ALLIANCE FAMILY

(Continued from page 12)

Women's Missionary Prayer Bands on March 12.

Mrs. H. O. Watkins, of French West Africa, led a prayer period in the morning session and Mrs. W. J. Bauman, of Colombia, brought a stirring message. A good time of fellowship was enjoyed during the lunch period.

Mrs. Walter Thomas, zone president, was in charge of the business meeting which began the afternoon session. It was voted to give an offering of $100 for work in Thailand. Mrs. Bauman closed the rally with a talk on current conditions in her field. A fall rally is slated for October at Ashland, Ohio.

Edmonton Church Holds Fruitful Campaign

The Richmond Park Tabernacle, Edmonton (Canada) south side Alliance church, concluded one of its most fruitful evangelistic campaigns on March 24 after God had unusually blessed the ministry of the Musical Edwardsons. The pastor, Rev. Edward McCarthy, and his people had approached the services in a spirit of prayer and expectation and other Alliance churches of the area gave their wholehearted support. As the Edwardsons presented their versatile program of music, messages and pictures taken on a recent world tour, the crowds increased and many spiritual victories were won. The campaign closed with a capacity crowd of 250 persons, and a Sunday school record of 120 was set. When the first home missions pledge was taken, it reached $450, to be used in work in Western Canada. No high-pressure appeals were made but many stepped out for God during invitations.

Deliverance Crusade at Greene, N. Y.

The Alliance Church of Greene, N. Y., closed a "Deliverance Crusade" on April 3 with Rev. W. H. Lewellen, evangelist of Clymer, N. Y. The pastor, Rev. John B. Harmon, writes that God's presence was real throughout the crusade and that sixty-six persons responded to the invitation to seek God for help. Mrs. Lewellen conducted afternoon children's meetings, with about forty attending each day. Of this number thirty-four professed to be saved.

Effective Evangelism at Daytona Beach

Rev. and Mrs. Joe Day conducted very effective evangelistic services in the Alliance church at Daytona Beach, Fla., March 25-April 7. Mr. Day preached the gospel with clarity and power in the evening, while Mrs. Day conducted a children's crusade each afternoon, illustrating her messages with unique demonstrations. Many professed salvation in the evening services, and a number of children responded to the invitation to receive Christ. The pastor, Rev. Glenn E. Smith, reports an increased interest in the Sunday school as a result.

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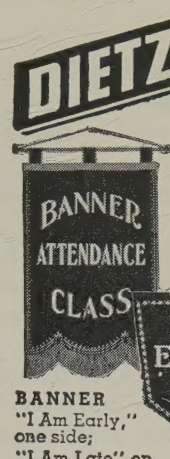

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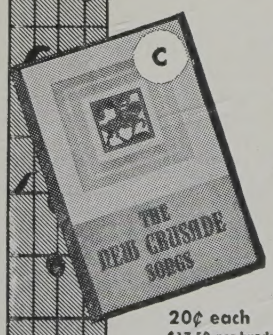

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Missionary Foundations

The Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him . . . and . . . made he a woman . . .
Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh . . .
What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder . . .

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it . . . dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife . . . and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered . . .
Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord . . .
Teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed . . .

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord . . .
Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it . . . withhold not correction from the child . . .
Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged . . . but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord . . .

Love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might . . . these words . . . thou shalt teach . . . diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up . . .

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right . . .
Honour thy father and mother . . .
Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father . . .
Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another . . .

Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness . . .
Continue . . . in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

And ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth.

—The Sunday-school World.

THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE
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